



Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

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HIGHLIGHTS

Red Meat Production
April Milk Production
Cattle on Feed
Cattle County Estimates
Potato Stocks
April Farm Labor
April Egg Production

April 2008 Red Meat Production

Montana slaughter plants produced 0.9 million pounds, dressed weight, of red meat during April 2008, down 14 percent from April 2007 and 23 percent from March 2008. Cattle slaughter totaled 1,100 head, 200 head below one year ago. The average live weight, at 1,163 pounds, decreased 23 pounds from last year.

During April, Montana plants slaughtered 700 hogs, down 100 head from a year ago. The average live weight, at 263 pounds, was up 16 pounds from last year. April sheep slaughter in the state totaled 200 head, up 100 head from April 2007. The average live weight increased 9 pounds to 101 pounds.

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 4.30 billion pounds in April, up 14 percent from the 3.75 billion pounds produced in April 2007.

Beef production, at 2.25 billion pounds, was 12 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.96 million head, up 10 percent from April 2007. The average live weight was up 24 pounds from the previous year, at 1,259 pounds.

Veal production totaled 11.9 million pounds, 1 percent above April a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 73,300 head, up 29 percent from April 2007. The average live weight was down 70 pounds from last year, at 278 pounds.

Pork production totaled 2.02 billion pounds, up 18 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 9.99 million head, up 18 percent from April

2007. The average live weight was down 1 pound from the previous year, at 269 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.3 million pounds, was up 2 percent from April 2007. Sheep slaughter totaled 221,400 head, 2 percent above last year. The average live weight was 138 pounds, unchanged from April a year ago.

January to April 2008 commercial red meat production was 16.8 billion pounds, up 8 percent from 2007. Accumulated beef production was up 5 percent from last year, veal was down 12 percent, pork was up 13 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 5 percent.

April U.S. Milk Production up 2.5 Percent

Milk production in the 23 major States during April totaled 14.8 billion pounds, up 2.5 percent from April 2007. March revised production at 15.1 billion pounds, was up 2.3 percent from March 2007. The March revision represented a decrease of 10 million pounds or 0.1 percent from last month's preliminary production estimate.

Production per cow in the 23 major States averaged 1,757 pounds for April, 12 pounds above April 2007.

The number of milk cows on farms in the 23 major States was 8.44 million head, 152,000 head more than April 2007, and 8,000 head more than March 2008.

U.S. Cattle on Feed Down 1 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.1 million head on May 1, 2008. The inventory was 1 percent below May 1, 2007 and 4 percent below May 1, 2006.

Placements in feedlots during April totaled 1.54 million, 2 percent below

2007 and 5 percent below 2006. Net placements were 1.46 million head. During April, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 315,000, 600-699 pounds were 278,000, 700-799 pounds were 428,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 515,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during April totaled 2.01 million, 11 percent above 2007 and 13 percent above 2006. This is the highest fed cattle marketings for the month of April since the series began in 1996.

Other disappearance totaled 75,000 during April, 24 percent below 2007 and 14 percent below 2006.

U.S. May Potato Stocks

The 13 major potato States held 92.7 million cwt of potatoes in storage May 1, 2008, up 17 percent from a year ago and 22 percent above May 1, 2006. Potatoes in storage accounted for 23 percent of the 2007 fall storage States' production, up 3 percentage points from last year. Klamath Basin stocks totaled 570 thousand cwt on May 1, 2008, down 5 percent from last year. Klamath Basin stocks include potatoes stored in California and Klamath County, Oregon. Disappearance from the start of harvest to May 1 was at 307 million cwt, 1 percent below last year but up 3 percent from 2006. Shrink and loss, at 23.4 million cwt, was down 3 percent from the same period in 2007 but up 6 percent from 2006. Processors have used 158 million cwt of the 2007 potato crop so far this season, down 3 percent from last year's season-to-date usage but up 6 percent from 2 years ago. Idaho and Malheur County, Oregon total processing decreased 1 percent from a year ago and Maine's total processing was 3 percent below 2007. Washington and the rest of Oregon total processing was 4 percent lower than last season. Dehydrating usage accounted for 33.4 million cwt of the total processing, down 8 percent from last year but 11 percent above the same period in 2006.

All Cattle, Beef, and Milk Cows: Inventory by Counties, January 1, 2008

County and District	All Cattle and Calves		Beef Cows and Heifers That Have Calved		Milk Cows and Heifers That Have Calved	
	2008	Rank	2008	Rank	2008	Rank
Deer Lodge	8,200	52	5,100	51	--	--
Flathead	9,600	51	4,900	53	--	--
Granite	24,500	42	17,000	41	--	--
Lake	50,200	22	30,000	21	1,400	2
Lincoln	--	--	1,500	55	--	--
Mineral	--	--	300	56	--	--
Missoula	7,900	53	5,000	52	--	--
Powell	45,500	28	32,300	16	--	--
Ravalli	34,000	35	18,300	39	1,400	2
Sanders	20,500	46	15,600	44	--	--
Other	2,600	--	--	--	900	--
NORTHWEST	203,000	--	130,000	--	3,700	--
Blaine	76,000	9	52,500	6	--	--
Chouteau	36,600	32	25,700	30	--	--
Glacier	47,300	26	29,300	22	800	6
Hill	31,500	37	19,700	38	--	--
Liberty	14,100	50	8,600	50	600	7
Phillips	85,200	6	54,200	3	--	--
Pondera	34,700	34	20,400	36	900	5
Teton	56,100	19	27,700	25	600	7
Toole	19,500	48	13,900	45	500	10
Other	--	--	--	--	600	--
NORTH CENTRAL	401,000	--	252,000	--	4,000	--
Daniels	24,100	43	17,700	40	--	--
Dawson	45,900	27	28,700	23	--	--
Garfield	64,300	16	41,000	10	--	--
McCone	31,600	36	20,400	36	--	--
Richland	56,800	18	27,500	26	--	--
Roosevelt	42,000	31	31,000	18	--	--
Sheridan	30,800	38	20,700	34	--	--
Valley	65,500	13	39,000	12	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--
NORTHEAST	361,000	--	226,000	--	--	--
Broadwater	18,400	49	12,900	47	--	--
Cascade	88,200	5	53,800	4	1,000	4
Fergus	111,100	3	70,100	2	--	--
Golden Valley	20,000	47	11,400	49	--	--
Judith Basin	65,400	14	38,800	13	--	--
Lewis & Clark	47,700	25	27,400	27	--	--
Meagher	47,800	24	28,300	24	--	--
Musselshell	53,800	20	30,100	20	--	--
Petroleum	24,700	41	16,400	43	--	--
Wheatland	34,900	33	22,800	32	500	10
Other	--	--	--	--	1,100	--
CENTRAL	512,000	--	312,000	--	2,600	--
Beaverhead	136,200	1	74,700	1	--	--
Gallatin	64,600	15	26,700	28	4,500	1
Jefferson	25,000	40	16,700	42	--	--
Madison	66,900	12	47,200	7	--	--
Silver Bow	5,300	54	3,700	54	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	200	--
SOUTHWEST	298,000	--	169,000	--	4,700	--
Big Horn	98,500	4	53,500	5	--	--
Carbon	52,800	21	26,200	29	--	--
Park	44,100	29	32,100	17	--	--
Stillwater	48,000	23	22,200	33	--	--
Sweetgrass	43,100	30	30,300	19	--	--
Treasure	21,000	45	12,700	48	--	--
Yellowstone	112,500	2	23,000	31	600	7
Other	--	--	--	--	400	--
SOUTH CENTRAL	420,000	--	200,000	--	1,000	--
Carter	70,100	10	41,000	10	--	--
Custer	78,600	8	36,600	14	--	--
Fallon	57,900	17	36,600	14	--	--
Powder River	67,500	11	41,900	9	--	--
Prairie	30,700	39	20,600	35	--	--
Rosebud	79,000	7	43,700	8	--	--
Wibaux	21,200	44	13,600	46	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--
SOUTHEAST	405,000	--	234,000	--	--	--
OTHER DISTRICTS	--	--	--	--	1,000	--
MONTANA	2,600,000	--	1,523,000	--	17,000	--

-- Counties are combined into "other" counties to avoid disclosure of individual information.

U.S. Hired Workers Down 7 Percent, Wage Rates Up 4 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 919,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 6-12, 2008, down 7 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 700,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 219,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.60 per hour during the April 2008 reference week, up 40 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.65 per hour, up 30 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$10.32 per hour compared with \$9.59 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.87 per hour, was up 45 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 41.0 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California and in the Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), and Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas) regions. In California, planted acreage of cotton, dry beans, and sugar beets declined sharply from 2007. Therefore, the demand for field workers was considerably lower. Excessive rain and flooding in the Delta region curtailed most field activities and lessened the need for field workers. In the Southeast region, wet conditions and low soil temperatures delayed

corn and cotton planting in Alabama and Georgia, reducing the demand for field workers. Snow and cold temperatures across most of the Mountain I region halted planting activity until late in the week, and calving and lambing were behind normal. These factors led to reduced demand for field and livestock workers. In the Southern Plains region, heavy rains in Oklahoma more than offset the drier conditions in Texas and delayed planting of row crops, resulting in fewer hired workers.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), Northeast I (New England and New York), Pacific (Oregon and Washington), and Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) regions. Strong demand from poultry operations and from the nursery and greenhouse industries in the Appalachian I region caused hired worker numbers to be higher. In the Appalachian II region, strong demand from the equine and cattle industries led to an increase in hired workers. Last year's reference week weather in the Northeast I region was plagued by frigid temperatures and snow. A return to more normal weather patterns this year resulted in a greater need for hired workers. In the Pacific region, increased demand from fruit growers and from the nursery and greenhouse industries kept worker numbers above the previous year. Heavy snow in parts of the Northern Plains region caused livestock stress which led to more supplemental feeding and increased the need for hired workers.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most

regions. The largest increases occurred in the Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Southeast and Appalachian I regions. In the Mountain III and Corn Belt I regions, the higher wages were due to a larger proportion of salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed the average hourly wage higher. The wage increase in the Corn Belt II region was due to a smaller percentage of part time workers. In the Southeast and Appalachian I regions, the higher wages resulted from a higher proportion of nursery and greenhouse workers. (See table on back page)

U.S. April Egg Production Down 1 Percent

U.S. egg production totaled 7.38 billion during April 2008, down 1 percent from last year. Production included 6.28 billion table eggs, and 1.11 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.04 billion were broiler-type and 66 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during April 2008 averaged 341 million, down 1 percent from last year. April egg production per 100 layers was 2,164 eggs, up slightly from April 2007.

All layers in the U.S. on May 1, 2008 totaled 341 million, down 1 percent from last year. The 341 million layers consisted of 280 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 57.7 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.84 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on May 1, 2008, averaged 71.8 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from May 1, 2007.

Wage Rates for Hired Workers, by Region & U.S., April 8-14, 2007 and April 6-12, 2008 1/

U.S. and Region 2/	TYPE OF WORKER						Wage Rates for All Hired Workers	
	Field		Livestock		Field & Livestock			
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
	Dollars per Hour							
Northeast I	10.10	10.19	9.59	9.97	9.90	10.10	10.77	11.00
Northeast II	10.34	9.71	8.56	8.77	9.80	9.42	10.55	10.00
Appalachian I	8.46	9.34	9.22	9.54	8.75	9.40	9.32	9.98
Appalachian II	8.64	8.87	9.07	10.07	8.81	9.44	9.77	10.05
Southeast	8.00	8.93	9.04	8.81	8.20	8.90	8.83	9.66
Florida	9.20	9.32	9.00	9.59	9.17	9.35	10.01	10.25
Lake	10.11	10.57	9.99	10.78	10.05	10.70	11.08	11.25
Cornbelt I	9.86	10.32	9.16	10.73	9.45	10.45	10.17	11.43
Cornbelt II	9.60	10.65	10.46	12.20	10.00	11.50	10.63	11.88
Delta	8.54	8.77	8.00	8.84	8.40	8.80	8.80	9.45
Northern Plains	10.04	10.73	9.75	10.20	9.91	10.40	10.63	11.00
Southern Plains	8.35	8.51	9.41	9.74	8.80	9.05	9.22	9.72
Mountain I	8.79	9.46	9.01	9.09	8.90	9.25	9.35	9.50
Mountain II	9.16	9.33	9.75	9.81	9.45	9.55	9.97	10.05
Mountain III	8.25	9.38	8.88	10.69	8.51	9.97	9.28	10.55
Pacific	9.39	9.14	9.70	11.34	9.45	9.41	10.24	10.00
CA	9.62	10.00	10.90	11.50	9.82	10.26	10.71	11.14
Hawaii 3/	10.60	10.80	3/	3/	10.77	10.91	12.85	13.28
US 4/	9.35	9.65	9.59	10.32	9.42	9.87	10.20	10.60

1/ Excludes Agricultural Service Workers. 2/ Regions consist of the following Northeast I: CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT. Northeast II: DE, MD, NJ, PA. Appalachian I: NC, VA. Appalachian II: KY, TN, WV. Southeast: AL, GA, SC. Lake MI, MN, WI. Cornbelt I: IL, IN, OH. Cornbelt II: IA, MO. Delta: AR, LA, MS. Northern Plains: KS, NE, ND, SD. Southern Plains: OK, TX. Mountain I: ID, MT, WY. Mountain II: CO, NV, UT. Mountain III: AZ, NM. Pacific: OR, WA. 3/ Insufficient data for livestock. 4/ Excludes AK.

COMING IN THE NEXT REPORTER

Barley County Estimates
Ag Prices Received
Winter Wheat Production
World Ag Supply and Demand

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